

Remarks

This Response is in reply to the Office Action mailed March 30, 2006. A Petition for Extension of Time is submitted herewith, together with the appropriate fee.

I. Summary of Examiner's Rejections

Prior to the Office Action mailed March 30, 2006, Claims 1-18 and 20-23 were pending in the Application. In the Office Action, Claims 1, 11 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Achacoso et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,161,149, hereafter Achacoso) in view of Balabanovic (U.S. Patent No. 6,624,826). Claims 2-10 and 12-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Achacoso in view of Balabanovic, and further in view of Ozzie et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,640,241, hereafter Ozzie).

II. Summary of Applicant's Amendment

The present Response amends Claims 1 and 11; and cancels Claim 23, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration Claims 1-18 and 20-22. Reconsideration of the Application, as amended, is respectfully requested. Applicant respectfully reserves the right to prosecute any originally presented or canceled claims in a continuing or future application.

III. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

In the Office Action mailed March 30, 2006, Claims 1, 11 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Achacoso (U.S. Patent No. 6,161,149) in view of Balabanovic (U.S. Patent No. 6,624,826). Claims 2-10 and 12-22 were rejected as being unpatentable over Achacoso in view of Balabanovic and further in view of Ozzie (U.S. Patent No. 6,640,241).

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended by the current Response to more clearly define the embodiment therein. As amended, Claim 1 defines:

1. *(Currently Amended) A message routing mechanism for a collaboration system that supports conversations between participants over multiple business protocols, comprising:*
a central collaboration hub hosting a plurality of collaboration spaces and capable of automatically receiving and sending messages between participants as part of a conversation between the participants;
a plurality of business protocol handlers, each of which are configured to recognize a different business protocol vocabulary, and which may be used by a participant to send and receive messages according to the particular business protocol vocabulary and process flow used by that participant,
wherein a conversation is a collective set of said messages, and wherein each of said collaboration spaces stores the set of messages for a particular conversation, and wherein each unique combination of a collaboration space together with a business protocol is associated with a unique uniform resource locator; and
a messaging protocol that allows each participant to use their own business protocol vocabulary to participate in the conversation and to specify a routing information, wherein the business protocol is specified by the uniform resource locator used by the participant to communicate with the collaboration space, and wherein the routing information is specified by the participant in a header of the messaging protocol.

Claim 1, as currently amended, defines the system as comprising a central collaboration hub hosting a plurality of collaboration spaces and capable of automatically receiving and sending messages between participants as part of a conversation; and a plurality of business protocol handlers, each of which are configured to recognize a different business protocol vocabulary, and which may be used by a participant to send and receive messages according to the particular business protocol vocabulary and process flow used by that participant. Claim 1 has been further amended to clarify that each unique combination of a collaboration space together with a business protocol is associated with a unique uniform resource locator. Claim 1 has also been amended to define that the routing information is specified by the participant in a header of the messaging protocol. Applicant respectfully submits that these features are not disclosed by the cited references.

The advantages of the embodiment currently defined by Claim 1 include that it is independent of any particular business protocol vocabulary, so it can support any standards-based or proprietary business protocol or business protocol vocabulary. For example, one participant may use a RosettaNet business protocol vocabulary, while another participant may use an EDI

business protocol vocabulary. By providing a plurality of business protocol handlers, the system allows for conversational communication between these collaboration participants that utilize different business protocols. In the embodiment defined by Claim 1, when the system receives a message on a particular business protocol destined for a particular conversation (i.e. at the particular URL assigned to that unique conversation/protocol combination), then it automatically knows which collaboration space (and conversation) the message should go to, and which business protocol is being used by the participant. With this information, the system can invoke the necessary business protocol handler to handle the message.

Since each combination of collaboration space and business protocol is associated with a unique uniform resource locator, this technique also allows a single collaboration space to support multiple business protocols and multiple conversations, by providing multiple URLs to that collaboration space.

Furthermore the ability to specify routing information by the participant in a header of the extensible protocol provides support for forwarding messages via intermediate destinations, and to multiple destinations.

Achacoso discloses a system and method for communicating information among members of a distributed discussion group having peripheral communication devices, and which includes communication between the peripheral communication devices and a central agent. As disclosed therein, the central agent receives and stores messages intended for at least one other group member. It creates a notice informing the at least one other group member that such a message exists and containing a channel (e.g., a hyperlink) directly to the memory location of the message. The at least one other group member may then elect to retrieve the message and may also elect to reply to the message. (Abstract).

Balabanovic discloses a method and apparatus for generating visual representations for audio documents. A dynamically adjustable audio gauge is used to visually represent an audio narration that may optionally describe an electronic document or image displayed upon a display device. (Abstract). As disclosed therein, a multimedia chronicle is a particular type of audio narrative that includes a singular narration thread and one or more references to various types of electronic documents. Multiple sub-chronicles, each containing a singular narration thread, may be combined to form a larger multimedia chronicle. (Column 8, lines 16-23). Once a multimedia

chronicle is created, user "A" may send the multimedia chronicle to another user via electronic mail. In one embodiment, in order to send the multimedia chronicle to another user, an XML representation of the multimedia chronicle is created. Once an XML representation of the multimedia chronicle is created, a unique URL pointing to the XML representation is subsequently emailed to another user, say user "B". (Column 9, line 16 - Column 10, line 3).

Applicant respectfully submits that the above descriptions of both Achacoso and Balabanovic appears to suggest that, in both cases the messages are sent via an email, together with an embedded link. (In Achacoso, a notice is sent informing the other group member that a message exists and containing a channel (e.g., a hyperlink) directly to the memory location of the message; in Balabanovic, a unique URL pointing to the XML representation of the multimedia chronicle is emailed to another user). This suggests that a manual intervention by a human operator is required to retrieve the ultimate message. However in the embodiment defined by Claim 1, as currently amended, the central collaboration hub is capable of *automatically* receiving and sending messages between participants as part of a conversation between the participants.

Additionally, it appears from the above description that Balabanovic does not teach that the routing information is specified by the participant in a header of the messaging protocol. Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly define that the *routing information is specified by the participant in a header* of the messaging protocol.

Furthermore, in the Office Action, it was submitted that both Achacoso and Balabanovic describe features associated with business protocols. However, Applicant respectfully submits that the protocols described therein (such as the hypertext transfer protocol) differ substantially from the B2B business protocols that are the subject of Claim 1, examples of which include cXML, BizTalk, and RosettaNet. To more clearly differentiate this, Claim 1 has been amended to define that each of the plurality of business protocol handlers are configured to recognize a *different business protocol vocabulary*, and may be used by a participant to send and receive messages according to the particular *business protocol vocabulary and process flow used by that participant*.

In view of the above comments, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1, as currently amended, is neither anticipated by nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claim 11

The comments provided above with respect to Claim 1 are hereby incorporated by reference. Claim 11 has been similarly amended to more clearly define the embodiment therein. For similar reasons as provided above with respect to Claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 11, as amended, is likewise neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claim 23

Claim 23 has been canceled by the current Response, rendering moot the rejection of this claim.

Claims 2-10, 12-18 and 20-22

Claims 2-10, 12-18 and 20-22 are not addressed separately but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim, and further in view of the comments provided above. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 2-10, 12-18 and 20-22 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations which render them patentable in their own right. Applicant respectfully reserves the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

Enclosed is a PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for extending the time to respond up to and including October 2, 2006.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

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Respectfully submitted,

Date: _____

By: /Karl F. Kenna/

Karl Kenna
Reg. No. 45,445

Customer No.: 23910
FLIESLER MEYER LLP
Four Embarcadero Center, Fourth Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-4156
Telephone: (415) 362-3800